

Issue
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BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CLUB
OFFICERS AND LEADER MEMBERS

AMA INSIDER



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AMA Mission

The Academy of Model Aeronautics is a world-class association of modelers organized for the purpose of promotion, development, education, advancement, and safeguarding of modeling activities.

The Academy provides leadership, organization, competition, communication, protection, representation, recognition, education, and scientific/technical development to modelers.

AMA Vision

We, the members of the Academy of Model Aeronautics, are the pathway to the future of modeling and are committed to making modeling the foremost sport/hobby in the world.

This vision is accomplished through:

- Affiliation with its valued associates, the modeling industry and governments.
- A process of continuous improvement.
- A commitment to leadership, quality, education and scientific/technical development.
- A safe, secure, enjoyable modeling environment.

President to President

Summer Modeling is on its Way

Bob Brown, AMA President, bobb@modelaircraft.org

I'm happy again ... the snow has finally melted and I had three consecutive days of flying in this week. Hopefully all of you are looking forward to the upcoming flying season as much as we are. The first couple of months of the season have some great events on the schedule.

May 11-18 is the time to visit the home of fun, friendship, and hospitality known as the Joe Nall Week at the Triple Tree Aerodrome in Woodruff, South Carolina. The AMA Education Trailer will be introduced to everyone. I think you will agree that this is going to be a great asset for model aviation. Improvements to the Triple Tree site include the removal of some airplane-grabbing trees, more permanent AC power, extra showers, toilets, and sinks. Would you believe they even planted more grass?

In early June we have Camp AMA. The two great instructors, RJ Gritter and Nick Maxwell, are coming off of great competition accomplishments. RJ came out on top at the Electric Tournament of Champions (ETOC) in Toledo, Ohio. Nick ventured to Australia to win the 3DX Championship. These champion pilots will provide great insight into their winning "secrets" to those in attendance at camp.

The Extreme Flight Championship will be in Muncie, Indiana, on June 14-16. The world's best helicopter and airplane pilots from 10

different countries will compete for this year's championship. The event has the most spectator appeal of any modeling competition and the plans for this year will provide a memorable experience.

Jay Smith, *Model Aviation* editor, spearheads the National Electric Fly-In (NEFI). Jay and his staff provide a weekend of electrifying fun for everyone in attendance. The folks working at AMA Headquarters and other volunteers provide the support Jay needs to produce a world-class event. Models of all sizes provide great fun for everyone. The proceeds from the weekend will be donated to the Animal Rescue Fund of Muncie, Indiana, and the National Model Aviation Museum.

The Outdoor National Aeromodeling Championships (Nats) begins on June 25 with Scale Aerobatics. Your AMA site will host the various categories of national championship competition for the next five weeks of the summer. If you are interested in competing or spectating, please see the schedule at: www.modelaircraft.org/events/nats/natsschedule.aspx.

Along with all of these events, your own area will also provide some excitement. The local schedules may be found in the Contest Calendar in *Model Aviation* or on our website at: www.modelaircraft.org/events/calendar.aspx.

Enjoy our great hobby! Fly safely! ➔

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|---|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
|  2013 Nats NATIONAL AEROMODELING CHAMPIONSHIPS ACADEMY OF MODEL AERONAUTICS - CHAMPAIGN, IL | RC Scale Aerobatics June 25-28 | RC Pylon Racing July 15-20 | RC Combat July 15-19 | |
| | RC Soaring June 29-July 6 | Control Line July 15-19 | RC Pattern July 21-25 | To request an entry packet, call (800) I-FLY-AMA (435-9262). |
| | Outdoor FF July 8-12 | Speed July 15-19 | RC Helicopter July 26-30 | The indoor Nats have moved to Champaign, IL |
| | RC & CL Scale July 12-14 | Combat July 15-20 | Indoor FF August 7-11 | |
| | | Racing July 15-19 | | |
| | | Carrier July 16-18 | | |
| | | Precision Aerobatics July 15-20 | | |

Beware the “Hun” in the Sun

Jim Tiller, jtiller@hotmail.com

The phrase ‘Beware the Hun in the Sun’ dates back to World War I. Allied pilots used this idiom to remember to watch for enemy airplanes using the glaring sun to mask their diving attacks. It remains a standard combat tactic to this day.

What does this have to do with safety? How often have you heard the dreaded, “I haven’t got it,” while standing in the pits or on the flightline. Although these are often mechanical or radio issues, sometimes they are not. We have all experienced the temporary loss of orientation in flight and with those new to the RC skies, it is more common than we’d like to think. Loss of control is one of the most common reasons cited in severe crashes. Therefore it becomes a high-priority safety concern.

Although we usually don’t have to worry about gun toting RC airplanes diving on us spitting bullets, the glaring sun can be a problem to even the most experienced RC pilots when our airplane flies across the orb of the sun. For those few seconds and the time it takes for your eyes to recover, you have lost control of your aircraft.

What can we do to minimize the problem? First, given we aviate mostly for recreation; we can choose when and where we fly. We can choose to postpone flight until the sun is in a more favorable position or find a spot of sky that does not bring our line of sight across the sun.

But at a contest or a fun-fly sometimes we don’t have a choice. Anything else we can do? On bright, sunny days, wear good-quality polarized sun glasses (they should also be ANSI-rated safety lenses as well—see a previous safety column). Remember that even the best sunglasses will not protect your eyes from damage when looking directly at the sun, but they will help with the glare and minimize the time your airplane disappears in the sky. Combine glasses with a hat or cap with a bill. This gives you a built-in sun visor.

But gizmos only go so far. What do you do when your airplane disappears in the sun? The simple answer is don’t panic, it will reappear again on the other side. Keep the sticks where they were and let the airplane do the flying. Try

not to do anything frantic until you have reacquired the plane on the other side. This may sound like simple advice, but it is easy—especially for new pilots—to get disoriented.

One of the most common problems is to mistake the orientation of the airplane as it reappears as a shadow. Once again, let it fly for a moment as you re-establish your visual cues as to attitude and direction. If that fails, give a small stick movement to the left. If it turns left, it is going away from you, if it turns right, it is coming toward you. These small test movements will soon get you back to normal. This advice is also good for newbies when your airplane gets out there so far you can’t see it clearly anymore.

Another problem encountered when you go through the sun is white spots that appear in your eyes from the sensory overload. These spots can be bad enough that you can’t see your airplane. In this case, remember the spots most often occur in the center of your vision, so re-establish contact using your peripheral vision.

In this or any serious loss-of-control situation, immediately call out for help. As I began this discourse, the words “I haven’t got it” will certainly get the attention of those around you. Briefly explain your situation and have them help you return the plane to level flight. Even if you are an experienced pilot, hand over the transmitter if need be. Don’t be embarrassed or prideful. Safety should be your first concern. And it could also save one of your expensive airplanes.

Still, it might be fun to put on the leather flying helmet and the dark goggles that those vintage aviators wore in days of old. Throw in a silk scarf for good measure. It won’t do much for helping your vision on sunny days, but it will certainly make you noticed at the flying field.

Summer Events

With summer coming, many of you are planning your summer flying schedule. I encourage all of you to try to get to at least one out-of-town event. First, you get to make some new friends or acquaint yourself with some old ones. You also get to see lots of beautiful airplanes. I always

come away with some new ideas stolen from someone or something at an event. I enjoy seeing how other people mount or rig their systems. I am always impressed by the creativity I see in our hobby.

But perhaps the best part is to expand your horizons. I have been part of the same club for about 15 years. There is a comfort that comes with that history. But it also makes you complacent. I know our safety rules and our flying styles and don’t even think much about it anymore. If you go to another club’s event, it forces you outside those familiar surroundings and makes you a better, safer flier.

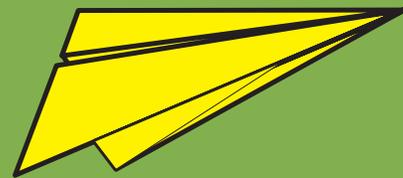
When you do go to an outside event, the safety rules are a two-way street. It is up to you as a participant to know the safety rules of the club field and abide by them. It is also incumbent on the hosting club to make sure that all the attendees all have the field rules and any particular event safety rules or any other issues of concerns.

At any event, remember the best rule is the Golden Rule. It never fails.

Happy summer flying. ➔

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Be Aware of All AMA Offers its Members

Rusty Kennedy, Chairman Leader Member Program, rustylm@verizon.net

I am writing this on April 3, and just a minute ago I received an email from AMA reminding me that my article is due. I never know what to write until I start writing. I was reading *MA* and it occurred to me that if a member read it cover to cover, he would be overwhelmed with the offerings AMA membership provides.

I won't go through a list but as Leader Members (LM) we should always be pointing out to clubs and members what is available. Remind members that AMA membership is a great value and is so much more than a magazine and

insurance. Every month I brief my club on something AMA and always hear, "I didn't know that."

As active LMs we should be keeping members and clubs current. Meet with new members and explain AMA to them. Give them a list of membership benefits www.modelaircraft.org/membership/membership/overview.aspx.

It would be of great benefit to you if you established regular contact with your associate vice president (AVP). If you don't know your AVP contact your vice president (VP). After you have

made contact, try to make it a point to send regular updates to him or her. Some examples might be upcoming events, publicity your club may have received, invite the AVP to your events and meetings, ask the AVP to keep you informed on AMA activities. Info copy your VP. If you do this, it won't be long before you have established good communication with district leadership.

I am here for you. If you need something or have an idea/suggestion never hesitate to contact me: amalprogram@gmail.com or (757) 812-2812 anytime. →

Club Corner

A Different Perspective on Safety in our Hobby

Jim Wallen, Club Corner author, sjwallen@tde.com

Most of the time when we talk about safety in our hobby we think about things that are associated with our aircraft and how we fly them. There are other aspects you may want to consider to make your club a safer place to fly.

Skin cancers are becoming much more commonplace. By the nature of our hobby we spend a lot of time out in the sun and subject ourselves to the damage caused by radiation when we choose to not wear sun protection products. If possible, keep sunscreen at the flying site for use by the members. Some health organizations may subsidize the cost. Slather it on when at the field and a life may be saved. Remember, cloudy weather can be just as harmful as blue skies.

Just a simple reminder: whenever possible avoid flying at the field by yourself. You may find yourself in trouble very quickly with no one around to help you.

I received an email from Stuart Carr from Crosswinds the other day and he had some pearls of wisdom about CPR at the flying field. I, for one, have experienced a couple of occasions where CPR was appropriate at the flying site. Donald Sass, an

M.D. from Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, had these comments:

"As a director of anesthesia training programs in U.S. Navy and civilian hospitals, and as a retired anesthesiologist, I know CPR cannot be best learned simply by watching a video or seeing it performed by actors on *House, M.D.*, or similar TV programs. CPR can be lifesaving, but the need for CPR has to be recognized quickly when it is there, procedures initiated quickly and performed properly. The final approach is not the time to think 'what do I do' especially if you are alone in the cockpit or at the field."

Donald gives thanks to Ed Eversole, himself an EMT, to Larry Falsetto, and to other members of the Executive Committee for promoting CPR training again this year. I am sure that classes can be set up to benefit your club as well. A human life saved because a club member took the initiative to set up some CPR training might well be one of life's greatest rewards. →

Do you know what products the AMA has to offer you and your club?

Discover what's available at www.modelaircraft.org/shopama/shopama.aspx

www.modelaircraft.org/shopama/shopama.aspx | 1-800-I Fly AMA (435-9262), ext. 212



AMA Search for New CFO

Gary Fitch, Executive Vice President

After longtime Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Doug Holland retired and he left some big shoes to fill.

The CFO's primary purpose is to oversee, on our members' behalf, the accounting and investment structure that exists at AMA Headquarters in Muncie, Indiana, along with helping AMA's Executive Council (EC) in long-range strategic planning. The CFO is a nonvoting member who is appointed by and serves at the discretion of the EC for a renewable three-year term. The CFO sits in all council meetings and advises us on any fiscal concerns to our organization as

a whole, and in particular, our 501(c) 3 tax-exempt status.

Knowing that our members come from myriad occupations and skills, I'm sure we have people out there with a strong finance, accounting and/or CPA background that have the experience with financial audits, as well as investments we need. If you are such a person and would be interested in volunteering some of your time to fill the vacant CFO position, we would like to hear from you. Please send your résumé and references directly to: Academy of Model Aeronautics, c/o CFO Search Committee, 5161 East Memorial

Dr., Muncie IN 47302. As an alternate, you can email them directly to my attention at amaevp@gmail.com.

It is our intent to review each résumé and develop a potential CFO list. From this we will contact references. Our goal is to create a short list of candidates we can bring to Muncie for an interview.

We will ultimately recommend the best qualified person to the EC for appointment to the CFO position. Who knows, you might be the one selected and find yourself sitting next to me at an EC meeting. Thank you for your consideration! →

Register now to be a Part of the National Model Aviation Day Celebration

Club registration for National Model Aviation Day is now available online. The nationwide event is scheduled for August 17, 2013. The AMA has established this event to celebrate the hobby, introduce the thrills and excitement of model aviation to your communities, and to raise money for the Wounded Warrior Project (www.woundedwarriorproject.org).

To sign up, please visit the online registration page (www.planetreg.com/E32681542201386), where you will be provided with additional information and tips for success. Clubs must register to be an official participant in the event. More details will be released on the AMA website, in *Model Aviation* magazine, on AMA social networks, and in future issues of *AMA Today*. →

Club Event to Support Autism Society

Chris Scheldt, SVRC Club President

The Sangamon Valley RC Flyers (SVRC) started the "Fly-In for Autism" in July of 2010. In the past, the club had hosted an open house to promote and generate interest in the hobby. In October 2009, I went to the club members with the idea of attaching our open house fly-in with a local charity.

The club approved moving forward on this event and my father, Harry Scheldt, and I began researching how to organize an event like this. The charity I had in mind was the Autism Society of America Central Illinois Chapter (ASACIC). I wanted to support this charity because I have a nephew that has autism. ASACIC was officially incorporated in January 2004, formed from the roots of a parent support group founded in 2002.

Our event raises money by charging a landing fee for RC pilots along with

raffling items donated by RC companies and local businesses. All of the proceeds go directly to ASACIC and are used to help fund training classes and workshops for parents along with several entertaining events for the children in these families.

In 2010 our first event raised approximately \$1,800 for ASACIC. We originally planned the event as a two-day weekend event with a cookout for all registered pilots. We had roughly 30 pilots attend. There were approximately 150 spectators with several volunteers from both SVRC and ASACIC.

We set up a few simulators for anyone who wanted to give RC flying a try, and also we had a couple of trainer airplanes available for anyone who wanted to sign up and actually fly. The pilots enjoyed open flying and members from surrounding clubs helped make the first year successful.

In 2011 we took the lessons we learned from 2010 and tried to streamline the fly-in into a one-day event, raising \$2,200 for ASACIC. SVRC raffled off a 46-inch flat-panel TV along with several other large and valuable items.

Our local ABC news station documented two hours of the event and aired it on a program called *Illinois Central*. We again set up simulators and RC trainer models for anyone who wanted to test out the hobby. The fly-in was cut short because of a rain storm that started around noon. We were only able to hold the event during a four-hour window.

In 2012 we stayed with the one-day

Club Event to Support Autism Society

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Basic Fire Safety

Brett Ohnstad, Safety Officer, Anoka County Radio Control Club, Inc., Coon Rapids MN

Imagine that you've been working on your latest project when you stop for a quick snack. Before you return to your workshop, you notice the smell of something burning.

You think that it can't be anything serious because your fire detector isn't screaming at you, but wait ... what fire detector? I must have one because that was where I got the last nine-volt battery for my FPV camera. Well that explains why that is not going off.

Maybe the smoke is coming from that LiPo battery that you picked up cheap online, but it can't be; that thing is in a charging bag. Could it be that the servo you were running through test cycles finally burned out? But no, that wouldn't make much sense either.

Your mind starts to panic as you realize that you left your hot glue gun on and it is sitting right next to the soldering iron you forgot to unplug and your new airplane. My airplane could be on fire! Wait, no! My house could be on fire!

You run into your workshop to find the trash can smoldering. It turns out that the rags that you used to wipe up some spilled fuel were in the process of starting to spontaneously combust. A moment later, and those rags would have started up in a nice little blaze had you not gotten them out of the house and into the open.

I have just described the perfect extreme fire prevention textbook cliché. But how close to the truth is the story for you? Many people do not own or have access to the proper fire safety equipment and preventative tools. A little advance planning and training will go a long way in making sure that you do not lose anything to fire.

Even if nothing like this has happened to you, don't pat yourself on the back quite just yet. You have some learning to do here.

Types of Fires

Fire is, in fact, a chemical reaction that depends on three properties that need to be present at the same time in order for combustion to occur. Just like the engine on your airplane, you need some sort of fuel or combustible, a heat source for ignition and for sustaining combustion, and oxygen. Remove any one of these

three items and, like your engine, the fire will stop.

The type of fuel being consumed in the fire will determine the classification of the fire.

- **Class A:** This includes solids such as wood, paper, and plastics (not metals).
- **Class B:** Any flammable liquids or gases such as fuel, oil, thinners, or paints.
- **Class C:** Electrical equipment fires.
- **Class D:** Metals such as aluminum and magnesium usually in shavings or metal dust.

Knowing the type of class of fire will help determine what type of extinguisher should be used on the fire. For example, a water-filled fire extinguisher that you would put on a wood fire could cause an oil fire to spread or cause additional damage in an electrical fire if the electrical equipment is still plugged in.

Types of Extinguishers

APW (air pressurized water) extinguishers are typically large, silver-colored cylinders that are filled with water. These are for use on Class A fires and stop the fire by removing the heat needed for continued combustion.

Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) extinguishers are most often found as red cylinders and can range from 5 to 100 pounds in size. They are useful on Class B and Class C fires and work by taking away the oxygen needed for combustion. As the CO₂ is very cold from expansion of the gas as it is released from the nozzle, it also removes some of the heat from the fire. CO₂ is not recommended for Class A fires because it does not typically remove enough oxygen from the fire to put the fire out and may not remove enough heat to be able to extinguish all of the embers in the fire resulting in a potential flare up.

Dry Chemical (DC) can be a red or white cylinder that can be anywhere between 5 and 20 pounds and can be easily purchased at a local hardware store. It will be classified as either ABC or BC for the type of fire it can extinguish. It are filled with a fine powder of monoammonium phosphate or some other agent that puts out the fire by separating

the fuel from the oxygen and interrupting the chemical reaction.

Extinguishers rated for Class D fires do not use a dry chemical because these agents could aggravate a Class D fire. Instead they may use a dry powder form of graphite or granular sodium chloride and the extinguishers can be relatively expensive. If you do perform metal work, make sure that you keep your work area clean of any fine metal shavings before it could potentially lead to a fire.

What to Do in Event of a Fire

Should you have a situation in which you have a fire, you need to make some quick decisions. Your first priority is to help any person who may be in immediate danger. Next, you need to call 911 or have someone else call. Even if it is a small fire, you need to make sure that help is on its way before you attempt to fight the fire yourself. Should you become incapacitated or unable to contain the fire, having called for backup ensures that help gets there soon.

If you have a fire extinguisher on hand and need to use it, all you have to remember is PASS:

- **P:** Pull the pin. This releases the safety on the extinguisher allowing you to use it.
- **A:** Aim at the base of the fire. This is where the chemical reaction of the fire is happening.
- **S:** Squeeze the trigger.
- **S:** Sweep the base of the fire from side to side until the fire is out.

Make sure that if you attempt to fight the fire, you position yourself with an escape that is away from the fire. Close any doors and windows if you can to help contain the fire and smoke to the smallest area possible. Remember that help is on its way because you already called 911.

LiPo batteries are a special instance of fire in which once ignited, the only thing that can realistically be done is to prevent the further spread of the fire with either an extinguisher or even possibly a bucket of sand.

Basic Fire Safety

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Club Event to Support Autism Society

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format, raising approximately \$2,200 for ASACIC.

Spectators increased to about 350 because of the promotions we received from local TV and radio stations. As in the previous year, the local station brought out a film team and recorded several hours of the event. A 10-minute video aired on *Illinois Central*.

This event brought pilots from farther away, including Jase Dussia from Kalamazoo, Michigan, who finished fifth at the XFC and fliers from St. Louis. We provided time for Jase and our own club member, Nick Rollins, to perform airplane and helicopter demonstrations. We again raffled off a large, flat-panel TV along with numerous other high-value items.

The fly-in has continued to grow in overall popularity. The number of RC pilots from different areas as well as the number of spectators continues to grow.

The premise behind the event was to find a way to give back to the local area. Being attached to a child with autism has helped drive this event annually and my father spends hundreds of hours organizing and requesting donations. He does most of the leg work and puts the whole thing together.

Every year the event becomes more positive. We invite local families who have children with autism to bring their kids to the event so everyone can put a face with the charity. Few things are more rewarding than seeing these kids at the flying field in awe of the aircraft on display and in the air.

We try to make sure each of the kids who want to fly gets a chance on one of our trainer airplanes. In 2012, one child waited several hours to fly one of the trainers. That year we also had a full-scale Cessna 172 on display. We wanted to get an aerial photo of our flying field with everyone there, so to help make it up to this child, we gave him a ride in the Cessna.

The look on his face was amazing. The whole flight all he talked about was all the things he could see in people's yards. I still remember him saying "those people have a pool; those people have a baseball field." This was his first ride in an airplane.

We have been lucky with the area's support of this event. In 2010, a local business owner made several low passes over our flying location in a full-scale P-51 Mustang to kick off the event.

I had met Jase Dussia at a regional IMAC event in 2011 and spent a few hours waiting out a rain delay talking to him and his family about our event. Jase has a friend in school with autism and he has taken this boy under his wing as kind of a school protector or guardian.

Jase is just a kid himself, but he makes sure this friend at school is looked after and always has a lunch partner. Knowing what I know through the stories my nephews tells me, this isn't always a common occurrence. The simplest thing as having a lunch partner means a lot to these kids.

Our club's goal is to try to raise as much money as we can to make sure these children and their families are given every opportunity to get whatever help, information, and instruction they need, not to mention public awareness. I've spoken with several people in the RC community since starting this event who have told me they either have a child with autism or know someone close to them that does.

We hope 2013 brings in more people and even more donation money so we can donate even more to ASACIC (www.asacic.org) and continue to give back to the community. →

Basic Fire Safety

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LiPo batteries have a high energy density and contain a flammable electrolyte making for a highly potent combination. Charging the battery while it is in a LiPo bag, in an ammunition box, or on a piece of ceramic will help prevent a secondary fire. Charging your LiPo battery underneath the open hood of your vehicle at the flying field on the other hand is a good way to make sure that you get to walk home at the end of the day.

Being proactive about fire is going to be your best fire preventative measure. Small extinguishers can easily be obtained and mounted in your workshop and on your field box. The early warning offered by a smoke detector can be an easy and efficient form of preventative measure, provided that you actually use them.

A properly installed and maintained smoke detector will have fewer annoying false alarms. This means placing them in your home and workshop in a place that has easy access to clear a false alarm, perform a test, or to change the battery. The easier it is to get to, the more likely that it is to be used.

Also change the battery and check your extinguishers twice a year, preferably at the start and end of Daylight Saving time. Just remember to save the old battery for the FPV camera. →

Creative Puns

Temple Aero Modelers Radio Control Aircraft Club, Temple TX

- The roundest knight at King Arthur's round table was Sir Cumference. He acquired his size from too much pi.
- A rubber band pistol was confiscated from algebra class because it was a weapon of math disruption.
- No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.
- A dog gave birth to puppies near the road and was cited for littering.
- A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.
- Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana.
- Atheism is a non-prophet organization.
- A small boy swallowed some coins and was taken to a hospital. When his grandmother telephoned to ask how he was, a nurse said, "No change yet."
- A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.
- The short fortune teller who escaped from prison was a small medium at large.
- The man who survived mustard gas and pepper spray is now a seasoned veteran. →

Concentration and Focus: Yours (And Your Airplane's) Best Friend

Rob Mawer, Simi Valley Flyers, California

Every time I do something dumb, I seem compelled to write about it. This article is about following the first rule of (full-scale) flying that I learned—before all other things, fly the airplane. Like all future FAA pilots, my instructor bombarded me with many things while I was flying such as:

What is your heading? What is the wind direction? Your heading is 170°, for VFR, what altitude are you supposed to be at (odd or even +500)? If you had to put down, where would it be? (My instructor actually did that while secretly shutting off the fuel to my Cessna 152 simulating an inflight emergency while heading toward Agua Dulce).

Those who have earned this certificate from the FAA know exactly where I'm coming from. Why did he have me do that? To get me used to the fact that there can be many distractions going on while you are flying such as collision avoidance, faulty instruments, Automated Terminal Information Service transcriptions, passenger chatter in the cabin, and airport controller instructions. The point is, your primary job as pilot in command is to focus on flying the

airplane above all else. Okay, so one might ask why the rambling preamble?

Flying our models is no different than flying full-scale aircraft. The laws of gravity are the same and are just as unforgiving, especially when you lose focus.

Case in point: One Sunday I was having a great day at our little electric field. The soccer season finished so we weren't booted off the field at 8:30 a.m. The weather was cold, but not so cold that your fingers lost feeling and more importantly, there was no wind so we were flying longer.

Now, while parks and recreation allows us to share this field with the soccer foundation, it is still a public park and the public (dog walkers, runners, and anyone generally looking for a shortcut) can be on the field. This particular Sunday, there were several folks out with their dogs, one in particular that thought it was a good idea to just stand in the landing pattern while his beloved pups "did their business." He was told once while standing in the middle of the field that he had to move out of harm's.

I was flying my E-flite Taylorcraft (my favorite), braving some inverted flying

(at high altitude), doing rolls, loops, and generally having a lot of fun. I decided to work on some slow flying and circling at the far end of the field (far from this individual). Unfortunately, my concentration and focus suddenly shifted towards this him as I seemed to be more concerned about his safety than for what I had in the air. The thing was, I was nowhere near him but I saw out of the corner of my eye that another airplane was landing close to him.

When I refocused my attention, my Taylorcraft was in a nose dive toward terra firma (Refer to the second rule of flying: "airspeed and altitude are your best friend," and I had neither). This lapse of focus was an instinctive reaction to a situation and something I (we) should not allow to happen. Unfortunately, it cost me an airplane (fortunately, it was only an airplane).

Losing focus, whether it is using a power saw, driving (that includes cell phone distractions), or anything that takes our attention from the job at hand, can have disastrous consequences. As for me, I picked up the remains of my beloved "T-Cart," licking my wounds, and yes, I did get another Taylorcraft (Gorilla Glue couldn't fix this one). →

Tips & Tricks

Self-Threading Screw Hole Procedure

This is a very common procedure. You should do this whenever you make a self-threading screw hole into the wood (to help strengthen it). This works especially well for parts that need to be removable (an aileron servo holder/cover is a good example) but would cause a crash if the screws feel out or stripped loose in flight. However, now that I've seen how much better the screws hold, I do it for pretty much every screw hole I drill into wood.

1. You usually start with a hole drilled a couple of sizes smaller than the screw (so it will create some good threads when screwed in the first time). For example, a standard, self-tapping servo screw requires a 1/16-inch hole drilled.
2. Install the part with the proper screw and barely tighten

(not too tight ... don't strip it out) it.

3. Loosen the screw and remove it and the part. Gain access to the newly threaded hole in the wood.
4. Drop a drop or two of thin CA glue into the hole and let it wick into the wood. If you need to, you can swish the glue around the wood hole's threads with a toothpick (but be quick so the toothpick doesn't get glue inside).
5. Let the glue dry completely for one hour. The idea is not to get the screw glued into the whole. The threads and surrounding wooden area will now be stronger and more like plastic.
6. Reinstall the part with the original screw. Use original threads and don't cross thread.

—from the newsletter of the Flying Aero Sport Team,
Brookville OH

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CONTACT US

We always welcome your comments and suggestions about the AMA *INSIDER* and any of its content. If you have anything to share, please send it to:

Newsletter Editor:

Ashley Rauen, ashleyr@modelaircraft.org
(765) 287-1256, ext. 228

Advisor:

Liz Helms, lhelms@modelaircraft.org

Director of Publications:

Rob Kurek, rkurek@modelaircraft.org
(765) 287-1256, ext. 220

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AMA Newsletter Editor
5161 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302